

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY MANAMA NIACT IMMEDIATE
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CINCPACFLT IMMEDIATE

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EXDIS FOR THE AMB -MILITARY ADDEES HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MORG, BA

SUBJECT: MIDDLE EAST FORCE DISCUSSIONS

REFERENCE: STATE 30235

1. TO PURSUE FURTHER POSSIBILITY OF RETAINING SOME SORT OF FACILITIES IN BAHRAIN IN SUPPORT OF U.S. MIDDLE EAST FORCE OPERATIONS, YOU SHOULD APPROACH APPROPRIATE GOB OFFICIALS ALONG FOLLOWING LINES INDICATING YOU ARE SPEAKING UNDER INSTRUCTIONS.

(A) USG HAS REVIEWED QUESTION OF CONTINUED U.S. NAVY PRESENCE IN GULF/INDIAN OCEAN AND HAS DETERMINED THAT SUCH PRESENCE WILL CONTINUE TO SERVE BROAD INTERESTS IN STABILITY OF AREA.

(B) USG IS DEEPLY APPRECIATIVE OF HOSPITALITY WHICH BAHRAIN HAS EXTENDED OVER MANY YEARS TO MIDDLE EAST FORCE COMMAND AND OF CONTRIBUTION BAHRAIN HAS THUS MADE TO FACILITATE MAINTENANCE OF U.S. NAVAL COMMAND IN AREA.

(C) USG, AS YOU KNOW, WOULD BE PLEASED TO HAVE THE PRESENT ARRANGEMENTS IN BAHRAIN CONTINUE SOMEWHAT LONGER. (FYI: IF AT ANY POINT IN YOUR DISCUSSIONS YOU FEEL IT TACTICALLY ADVISABLE, YOU ARE AUTHORIZED TO SUGGEST TO GOB THAT EFFORTS TO WORK OUT A NEW FORMULA FOR U.S. NAVY PRESENCE

IN REGION IN ORDERLY FASHION WOULD BE MEASURABLY ASSISTED IF GOB WOULD EXTEND PRESENT MIDDLE EAST FORCE ARRANGEMENTS SIX MONTHS TO A YEAR. END FYI).

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(D) AT THE SAME TIME USG UNDERSTANDS GOB'S DESIRE TO WORK OUT NEW ARRANGEMENTS WHICH WOULD PERMIT U.S. NAVY TO CONTINUE TO OPERATE IN AREA WITHOUT BAHRAIN APPEARING TO BE THE SOLE POINT OF REGIONAL SUPPORT FOR SUCH OPERATIONS. USG IS PREPARED TO CONSIDER GOB'S IDEAS ON HOW SUCH NEW ARRANGEMENTS MIGHT BE WORKED OUT.

2. BEGIN FYI: AFTER CAREFUL REVIEW WITH DOD AND TAKING INTO ACCOUNT RECENT ASSESSMENTS OF CERTAIN EMBASSIES IN AREA ON LIKELIHOOD OF HOST GOVERNMENTS ACCEPTING MIDDLE EAST FORCE VISITS, WE BELIEVE MIDDLE EAST FORCE COULD CONTINUE TO OPERATE EFFECTIVELY ON FOLLOWING BASIS IF NECESSARY:

(A) STATIONING AGREEMENT WITH BAHRAIN WOULD BE ALLOWED TO TERMINATE UPON ASSURANCE THAT BAHRAIN WOULD CONTINUE TO PERMIT MIDDLE EAST FORCE SHIPS TO VISIT AND THAT STATUS OF FORCES PROVISIONS OF CURRENT AGREEMENT WOULD BE RETAINED TO COVER DOD PERSONNEL STATIONED IN OR VISITING BAHRAIN IN OFFICIAL CAPACITY.

(B) FLAGSHIP AND MIDDLE EAST FORCE COMMAND WOULD CEASE TO USE BAHRAIN AS A HOMEPORT AND COMMAND WOULD OPERATE AT SEA FROM FLAGSHIP. THERE WOULD BE NO OSTENSIBLE MIDDLE EAST FORCE COMMAND PRESENCE ONSHORE IN BAHRAIN.

(C) MIDDLE EAST FORCE SHIPS, INCLUDING FLAGSHIP, WOULD BE PERMITTED TO VISIT BAHRAIN IN APPROXIMATELY SAME MANNER THEY VISIT OTHER SELECTED PORTS IN AREA. FOR FLAGSHIP WE WOULD NEED ASSURANCES THAT EACH SUCH VISIT COULD BE UP TO ONE MONTH IN DURATION IN BAHRAIN, TWO WEEKS DURATION ELSEWHERE. WE WOULD SEEK MINIMUM OF SIX SUCH VISITS ELSEWHERE, AND PREFER FOUR MONTHS TOTAL FLAGSHIP TIME IN BAHRAIN, PROVIDING A TOTAL OF SEVEN MONTHS IN PORT. IF, AS NEGOTIATIONS PROCEED, GOB PROVES UNWILLING TO ACCEPT THIS PROPORTION OF INPORT TIME, WE WOULD BE PREPARED IF NECESSARY TO SCALE DOWN PROGRESSIVELY NUMBER OF VISITS TO BAHRAIN, AND INCREASE VISITS ELSEWHERE, TO THE POINT THAT INPORT TIME FOR FLAGSHIP IN BAHRAIN TOTALS TWO MONTHS A SECRET

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YEAR- WE WOULD MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO RESTRICT OUR REQUESTS TO OTHER LITTORAL STATES FOR INCREASED INPORT TIME TO FREQUENCY AND DURATION CITED REFTEL.

(D) WE WOULD THEN NEGOTIATE WITH GOB TO RETAIN AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE OF THE PRESENT ADMINISTRATIVE AND LOGISTICAL SUPPORT FACILITIES MIDDLE EAST FORCE PRESENTLY ENJOYS IN BAHRAIN, INCLUDING ARRANGEMENTS FOR FLAG AIRCRAFT. IF NECESSARY, DOD PERSONNEL PERMANENTLY STATIONED ASHORE IN BAHRAIN (WITH POSSIBLE EXCEPTION OF FLAG AIRCREW) WOULD

BE WITHIN AN ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE HAVING NO DIRECT OSTENSIBLE LINK WITH MIDDLE EAST FORCE COMMAND. HENCE, SUPPORT WHICH DOD CONTINGENT PROVIDED TO VISITING MIDDLE EAST FORCE SHIPS AND PERSONNEL WOULD, IN APPEARANCE, BE NO DIFFERENT FROM SUPPORT IT MIGHT PROVIDE TO OTHER DOD ACTIVITIES INCLUDING DOD PARTICIPATION IN BAHRAIN SCHOOL. OBVIOUSLY, PRESENT DOLS 4 MILLION PER YEAR RENT WHICH DOD PAYS TO GOV WOULD HAVE TO BE REVIEWED AND REDUCED IN LIGHT OF THE FACILITIES BAHRAIN CONTINUES TO MAKE AVAILABLE. END FYI.

3. YOU ARE REQUESTED TO SEEK CLEAREST AND MOST DEFINITIVE POSSIBLE GOB VIEW OF WHAT SUPPORT IT MIGHT CONTINUE TO PROVIDE MIDDLE EAST FORCE. YOU SHOULD REPORT CONVERSATIONS FULLY, WITHOUT INDICATING ACCEPTANCE OF ANY FORMULA AT THIS STAGE WITHOUT FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS. AS DISCUSSIONS WITH GOB PROCEED, YOU CAN BE GUIDED BY THE CONSIDERATION PRESENTED PARA 2 ABOVE IN SEEKING TO MOLD GOB THINKING, BUT SHOULD NOT REPEAT NOT INDICATE FIRM AGREEMENT TO ANY OF THESE CONDITIONS WITHOUT SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS. WE WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR ASSESSMENT WHETHER BASIC OPERATING

CONDITIONS PROVIDED FYI ABOVE ARE NEGOTIABLE AND INDEED
MIGHT BE MADE MORE FLEXIBLE FROM OUR STANDPOINT, E.G.,
WOULD BAHRAIN BE WILLING TO AUTHORIZE MORE THAN FOUR MONTHS
OF FLAGSHIP VISITS ANNUALLY WITH UNDERSTANDING THAT ADDI-
TIONAL TIME WOULD NOT NECESSARILY BE UTILIZED.

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